

## Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the Disposal of Residential Swimming Pool Water

The Department of Natural Resources (Department) strongly recommends that owners or operators of residential swimming pools implement the following BMPs prior to draining or discharging pool water:

1. Let the pool water sit for at least 6 to 8 hours in the holding structure ( $\leq 7$  feet in depth) in direct sunlight prior to discharge to allow chlorine to dissipate to appropriate levels.
2. Test the pH of the pool water to ensure it is close to neutral (near pH 7) before draining. Adjust the pH if necessary.
3. Remove all excess sediment and leaves from the water.
4. Drain the pool over a well-vegetated area on the owner's property to slow down the discharge rate, to filter any solids, provide infiltration, and provide some aeration. The Department strongly recommends that the pool water not be drained directly (i.e. direct connection with a pipe or hose) into a surface water or storm sewer.

**Note:** If the only option is to directly drain the pool water to surface water, the discharge will need to be covered under the Swimming Pool and Water Attraction General Permit (WI-0046523). Instructions on how to apply for coverage under this general permit can be found at our website here: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/wastewater/GeneralPermits.html>.

5. Drain the water at a slow rate so it does not cause erosion.
6. The pool water may be directed to a public sanitary sewer system, if allowed by the municipality. This can be accomplished through a household drain such as a bathtub, sink or floor drain. Ensure the plumbing is adequate to accept the rate of flow from the pool. Check with a licensed plumber before draining pool water into a sanitary drain.
7. Depending upon local ordinances, residents may not be allowed to open a manhole cover to drain pool water into the sanitary sewer system or storm sewer system. Please check with your municipal government before considering this option.
8. The Department strongly recommends that pool water not be drained into a septic system. Septic systems may not be able to handle the flow from the pool and may fail. Please check with a licensed plumber before considering this option.

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